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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/007,317	11/05/2001	Robert R. DeWitt	0412-P00912US3	4088
110	7590	10/07/2003	EXAMINER	
DANN, DORFMAN, HERRELL & SKILLMAN 1601 MARKET STREET SUITE 2400 PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103-2307			BUTLER, MICHAEL E	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3653		

DATE MAILED: 10/07/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No. 10/007,317	Applicant(s) DeWitt et al.
Examiner Michael E. Butler	Art Unit 3653



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on Nov 5, 2001

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on Nov 27, 2002 is/are a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 7

6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION***Priority***

1. Applicants claim of priority as a CIP of application 09/160401 filed 9/26/98 and as a CIP 09/113869 filed 7/10/98 and as a CIP of 08/687704 filed 7/26/96 and

Drawings

2. Applicants drawings filed 11/27/02 are acceptable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stevens et al. '577 in view of Miller. Stevens et al. '577 discloses the major elements including:

(Re: cl 1,10,17) providing a stack of mail comprising envelopes containing documents (c5 L 55-58)

serially feeding envelopes from an input bin (c5 L 55-58)

opening an envelope along at least one edge (c5 L 55-58)

presenting contents of the envelope for removal at an extraction station (c5 L 55-58)

holding the envelope at the extraction station while contents are removed from the envelope (c8 L 39-52; c5 L 55-58)

feeding the contents to an imager and scanning the contents (c6 L 8-24)

removing the envelope from the extraction station after removal of the envelope contents (c9 L 30-36)

storing image data on a non-volatile storage medium (c 17 L 22-54)

the opening step is performed by cutting along at least one edge (5 L 64-67;c8 L 19-29)

(re: cl 2) the envelope is pulled apart to expose the contents (c9 L 10-14)

verifying that all of the contents of the envelope have been removed (c8 L 53- c9 L 36)

holding an envelope at a verifier while a subsequent envelope is held at the extraction station (necessary to wait in view of envelope is conveyed from extractor to verifier before verifier is available)

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scanning contents to obtain magnetic image data and optical image data of selected documents (c6 L 8-24)

analysis of the magnetic indicia and optical image data is corroborated to verify accuracy of the document (c6 L 8-24)

 magnetic indicia is read to locate and read magnetic indicia and optical image data (c6 L 8-24)

determining transaction type and correlating image data with the transaction type (c6 L 8-38)

documents are singulated to serially convey the documents through an imager (c5 L 67- c6 L 2) examining the removed contents to determine information regarding the contents and controlling the manner in which the contents are fed to the imager in response to the determined information (c6 L 8-38)

 the documents are sorted responsive to the determined information (c6 L 8-38)

 imager comprised multiple chutes in which documents are feed according to document type (c6 L 8-38)

 the removed documents are examined to determine information and auditory signals are provided to determine information & control processing of the contents (c6 L 8-11)

 transferring envelope contents to the imaging station (c6 L 8-10)

 magnetically scanning at least one document to read magnetic indicia (c6 L 8-24)

 analyzing optical image data for at least one document to locate and read magnetic indicia (c6 L 8-24)

 results of magnetically scanning and optically scanning documents are used to compare and locate magnetic indicia (c6 L 8-24).

Miller et al. discloses a semi-automated document processing system in which the automated the document is manually removed by an operator from a cut envelope (c7 L 46-53;c1 L 36-39). It would have been obvious at the time of the invention to omit the automated document extractor and manually remove the document from the envelope because manual removal saves the capital cost associated with the automated extractor and provides a reliable approach to document removal verification as taught by Miller et al. and thereby come up with the instant claimed invention.

5. Claims 1-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stevens et al.

‘273 in view of Miller. Stevens et al. ‘273 discloses the major elements including:

 serially feeding envelopes from an input bin (c5 L 1-2)

 opening an envelope along at least one edge (c9 L 35-55)

 presenting contents of the envelope for removal at an extraction station (c10 L 12-48)

 holding the envelope at the extraction station while contents are removed from the envelope

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feeding the contents to an imager and scanning the contents (c21 L 13-17)
removing the envelope from the extraction station after removal of the envelope contents (c 15 L 1-19; c10 L 12-48)
storing image data on a non-volatile storage medium (c12 L 40-65)
the envelope is pulled apart to expose the contents (c10 L 12-48)
verifying that all of the contents of the envelope have been removed (c10 L 12-48)
holding an envelope at a verifier while a subsequent envelope is held at the extraction station (c 13 L 1-31, system precludes passage of documents while retained document is in envelope as seen by gating of conveyors)
scanning contents to obtain magnetic image data and optical image data of selected documents (c29 L 1-40)
analysis of the magnetic indicia and optical image data is corroborated to verify accuracy of the document (c21 L 14-59; c 22 L 22-40)
magnetic indicia is read to locate and read magnetic indicia and optical image data (c21 L 14-59; c 22 L 22-40)
determining transaction type and correlating image data with the transaction type (c 22 L 7-40)
the opening step is performed by cutting along at least one edge (c9 L 34-55)
documents are singulated to serially convey the documents through an imager (c16 L 1-10)
examining the removed contents to determine information regarding the contents and controlling the manner in which the contents are fed to the imager in response to the determined information (c 22 L 7-40)
the documents are sorted responsive to the determined information (c29 L 65- c30 L 40)
imager comprised multiple chutes in which documents are feed according to document type (c 22 L 7-40)
the removed documents are examined to determine information and auditory signals are provided to determine information & control processing of the contents (c21 L 14-59)
magnetically scanning at least one document to read magnetic indicia (c 22 L 7-40)
analyzing optical image data for at least one document to locate and read magnetic indicia (c21 L 14-59; c 22 L 22-40)
results of magnetically scanning and optically scanning documents are used to compare and locate magnetic indicia (c21 L 14-59; c 22 L 22-40).

Stevens et al. '273 further teaches the modularity and interchangablility of the component subsystems, particularly of the extractor (c5 L 1-5).

Miller et al. discloses a semi-automated document processing system in which the automated the document is manually removed by an operator from a cut envelope (c7 L 46-53;c1 L 36-39). It would have been obvious at the time of the invention to omit the automated document extractor and remove the document from the envelope because removal saves the capital cost associated with the automated extractor and provides a reliable approach to

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document removal verification as taught by Miller et al. and thereby come up with the instant claimed invention.

Conclusion

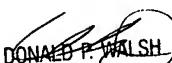
6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Exmr. Michael E. Butler whose telephone number is (703) 308-8344.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Donald Walsh, can be reached on (703) 306-4173. The fax number for the Group is (703) 305-7687.

Michael E. Butler

Michael E. Butler

Examiner


DONALD P. WALSH
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600